Industrial Growth Centres in Assam

1516. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for setting up of Industrial Growth Centres in Assam;

(b) the number of Industrial Growth Centres set up so far in the State, location-wise;

(c) the details of the funds allocated for the purpose; and

(d) if no funds have been allocated so far, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Under the Growth Centre Scheme, three Growth Centres are to be set up in Assam. Of these, two Growth Centres one each at Chariduar (district Sonitpur) and Matia (District Goalpara) have been sanctioned by the Central Government and are at various stages of development. For the third Growth Centre proposed to be set up at split location at Chaygaon-Patgaon in Kamrup District, a revised proposal from the Government of Assam has been received which is under consideration in this Department. An amount of Rs. 1450 lakh as Central assistance has so far been released under the scheme to the State of Assam.

Foreign investment in plantation crops in Kerala

1517. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign investors are pressing Government to allow foreign investment in the plantation sector of Kerala;

(b) whether Government propose to allow foreign investment in the plantation crops such as rubber, coffee, tea, etc. in the State;

(c) whether the WTO insisted to allow the above investment;

(d) whether any foreign companies or investors have put forward any application to allow investment in the plantation sector of the State;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) whether Government consider to review the proposal, if any, in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) As per the existing policy, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not allowed in plantation sector excepting for tea where 100% FDI is allowed subject to the following conditions:-

(i) compulsory divestment of 26% equity of the company in favour of an Indian partner/Indian public within a period of 5 years; and

(ii) prior approval of the State Government concerned in case of any future land use change.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Treating EOUs at par with SEZs

1518. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Export Oriented Units are on decline as compared to the Special Economic Zones;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the incentives available to the SEZs over Export Oriented Units and how they compare with exports, investment and employment generation during the last three years, year-wise;

(d) whether Government propose to treat Export Oriented Units at par with SEZs on key issues like service tax and financing facilities; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?